



# Kington Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 116701  
**Local Authority** Herefordshire  
**Inspection number** 290601  
**Inspection dates** 6–7 March 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Terry Elston

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Mill Street
<b>School category</b>	Community		Kington
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		HR5 3AL
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01544 230363
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	218	<b>Fax number</b>	01544 230521
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Dean Benbow
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Anne Phillips
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 September 2002		

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school admits pupils mostly from the immediate area. Very few come from minority ethnic backgrounds. An increasing proportion of families have moved to the area from middle European countries, and a small number of pupils speak English as an additional language. Polish is the most common mother tongue apart from English. Nearly a quarter of pupils have learning difficulties and disabilities, which is a little higher than that found nationally. An Early Years Assessment and Intervention Unit operates from the school two afternoons a week. The school has been awarded Healthy Schools and Eco Schools status and achieved the Silver Artsmark award in 2005.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The overall quality of education on offer at Kington Primary School is satisfactory but has some important strengths that justify the school's good reputation in the area. Pupils make the sort of progress expected of pupils nationally, overall, and good progress in the Nursery and Reception, where the teaching is consistently good. By the time they leave the Reception class, their skills are in line with those expected in most schools in all areas. Standards by the end of Year 6 are broadly average, but with weaknesses in writing because pupils have too few opportunities to write in subjects other than English. The exception is in science, where pupils write extensively about their experiments. Girls tend to make faster progress than boys, especially in English and mathematics. The school recognises this, and most teachers work hard at encouraging boys to answer questions and providing work that interests them. While the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, it varies considerably from class to class. In some lessons, more able pupils are given demanding, exciting tasks that stretch them to the full, while in others they just do more of the same work. This inconsistency in teaching happens because senior staff do not give teachers clear enough guidance on what they do well and what they need to do better. Nevertheless, leadership and management are satisfactory. The school is led effectively by the headteacher, who makes an important contribution to the good personal development and well-being of pupils. Pupils enjoy school because they feel safe and enjoy their lessons. They behave well and nearly all attend regularly. They have a good understanding of how to stay safe and healthy, and are adequately prepared for the future.

Pupils take full advantage of the good, well-planned curriculum and the many clubs out of school time. There are some good links with other schools and colleges that enable those with talents in music and sport to excel. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. There have been good improvements in the provision for children in the Foundation Stage, rates of attendance and standards in information and communication technology (ICT). With satisfactory systems to evaluate its effectiveness, it is soundly placed to improve further. Governors do their job well and have a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Parents think very highly of their school and appreciate the good care, support and guidance it offers to their children. One parent echoed the views of many when writing, 'It is brilliant that my little girl is so excited about activities she does at school. The staff are very supportive and caring.'

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing, giving pupils better opportunities to use and develop their writing skills in all subjects.
- Improve the quality of teaching to provide more challenging work for the more able pupils and ensure that boys learn as quickly as girls.
- Evaluate teaching and learning more effectively so that teachers can be made aware of how to make improvements.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Children's levels of attainment on entry to the Nursery are generally similar to those of most schools, although an increasing proportion has weak reading and language skills. They make good progress in the Nursery and Reception, particularly in their personal and social development and language, and when they enter Year 1 their attainment is in line with expected levels in all areas.

By the end of Year 2, pupils have made satisfactory progress, but while standards are broadly average, they are below average in writing. Girls achieve well, and attain significantly higher standards than boys in reading, writing and mathematics. Many boys struggle with writing in particular. Few enjoy writing and they generally write far less than girls do.

Standards by the end of Year 6 are broadly average, overall, but below average in writing. In the 2006 national tests, while standards were average in science, they were significantly below average in English and mathematics. Progress of these pupils since their assessments in Year 2 was good in science, satisfactory in mathematics but inadequate in English, where pupils' writing skills let them down. The school missed its ambitious targets last year in both English and mathematics, mainly because boys achieved less well than girls. The school rightly has the raising of boys' standards as a priority, and measures to improve their attainment are already starting to bear fruit. In 2006, staffing difficulties meant that Year 6 pupils suffered significant disruptions in their teaching. This is no longer the case. The current group of pupils with a settled staff are doing better and their progress is satisfactory in all subjects. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language make satisfactory progress, but few more-able pupils achieve as well as they are capable of in English and mathematics.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are very polite to each other and to adults. Behaviour is good, overall, and often outstanding in lessons and assemblies. It is supported by a clear understanding of right and wrong. Pupils are developing a mature commitment to living harmoniously in a multicultural society. They feel very safe and secure at school and say that incidences of bullying are rare. They all feel confident that adults at the school will help them resolve problems they may have. Pupils say they really enjoy lessons and the many social and cultural activities planned for them. One pupil's views were typical of many when she said, 'It's a lovely school where people get on really well and look after each other'. Rates of attendance are average and greatly improved since the last inspection. Pupils clearly understand the need to maintain a healthy lifestyle and do their best to put this into action at school and at home by eating a balanced diet and taking plenty of exercise. They are justifiably proud of the school council and the impact it has had on improving the school community. For example, their discussions with the catering staff have led

to healthier lunch menus. Pupils welcome responsibility as playground buddies and helpers and support local and national charities enthusiastically. They are adequately prepared for the future, although weaknesses in English make it hard for some to express themselves clearly.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

While the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, it varies from class to class. In particular, while some teachers provide well for the wide range of abilities in the class, others fail to challenge the more able groups and their progress is restricted. In one outstanding lesson, for example, the teacher planned writing tasks very carefully to provide work that suited the needs of all groups of pupils. So while some pupils worked on basic English skills, others were conducting their own research on sharks, and produced a detailed report on the different species. All groups made excellent progress and the more able pupils had used their talents to the full. This is in contrast to a minority of other lessons that offer little challenge to more able pupils other than to do more of the same work until the others have finished. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well by establishing clear rules and applying them consistently. As a result, lessons are calm and pupils enjoy their work free of interruptions. Teachers make learning enjoyable by using interesting resources such as whiteboards attached to computers. Pupils love these and concentrate intently as the teachers write and show pictures on them. Teaching assistants support pupils' learning well, and ensure that those with learning difficulties and disabilities and those with English as an additional language keep up with others in the class. The teaching and learning in the Nursery and Reception are consistently good. Activities are varied, challenging and fun and children learn quickly. This was seen to very good effect in one session when the adults made full use of the sandpit flooded by a rainstorm to enable the gleeful children to explore floating and sinking and count the ducks bobbing on the water. Assessment is satisfactory, but the quality of marking is not always good enough to show pupils how to move forward.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The good curriculum supports pupils' personal development well. Swimming lessons, physical education classes and the many sports clubs support pupils' good efforts to keep fit. The good personal, social and health education effectively develops pupils' understanding of the need to live healthily. 'Enrichment' afternoons provide many good opportunities for pupils to broaden their interests and aspirations. For example, pupils really enjoy helping to produce the school newspaper, learning to cook and growing herbs in the 'eco-garden'. Pupils talk excitedly about their visits out of school, and Year 6 pupils said how much their recent overnight visit to London boosted their confidence through meeting new people. Assemblies, music and art and design lessons

do much to enhance pupils' spiritual development by providing many opportunities for reflection on such aspects as feelings and the appreciation of beauty. In English lessons, writing is improving because greater emphasis is placed on developing pupils' vocabulary through talking, listening and practising writing in different styles. However, the demands on pupils' writing in all subjects are not high enough and the over-reliance on worksheets in some classes does little to develop pupils' writing skills. The school's programmes to support pupils with learning difficulties are satisfactory. Such pupils make progress that is similar to that of other pupils. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their musical and sporting talents at the local high school and sports clubs. However, curriculum planning provides too few opportunities for more able pupils to make the best of their talents.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The good care, guidance and support are valued very highly by both pupils and parents. Teachers are thorough in their recording of pupils' academic and personal development, but do not always make it clear to them what their targets are or how to make improvements. This makes it hard for pupils to judge their own progress. Health and safety procedures are good and are reviewed regularly to ensure pupils' well-being. As a result, the school is a secure and happy place in which pupils enjoy learning. Child protection systems are robust and all staff have had good recent training. The school does much to encourage pupils to adopt healthy lifestyles, as has been recognised by a recent Healthy Schools award. Teachers are very careful to emphasise safe practices in lessons such as science and food technology. Links with other professionals such as education welfare officers and health staff are very good and provide valuable support for the school.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The headteacher has done well to create a good team spirit in the school where all staff and pupils work well together. She has developed a very good partnership with parents, who value the school's work highly. The recently formed leadership team has made a good start and knows how to rectify weaknesses in the school. Senior leaders' grasp of the school's performance is satisfactory, but sometimes over generous because its systems to measure pupils' progress against other schools, and to set realistic targets based on pupils' current levels of attainment, are not developed well enough. They recognise this, and new assessment systems are improving things. Leaders evaluate the quality of teaching and learning regularly, but are keener to celebrate teachers' strengths than pinpoint their weaknesses. This helps to explain why teaching is satisfactory rather than good, and accounts for variations in its quality across the school. Governance is good. Governors support the school well and have the confidence and knowledge to hold it to account.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

As you know, two inspectors visited your school recently. We really enjoyed our two days with you and found you welcoming and friendly. The floods made it an exciting journey to school, but the children in the Nursery made the best of the weather when they did so much good work in the pond formed by the heavy rain. We enjoyed hearing the choir sing and thought you were brilliant in assemblies.

What we found out about the school:

- You make the sort of progress expected of pupils, but some of you struggle with writing.
- Boys do not always do as well as they should.
- Your behaviour is good and you are very kind to each other.
- You know a lot about how to stay safe and keep healthy.
- The teaching is satisfactory, but you learn faster in some classes than others. In some lessons, the work for some of you is not hard enough.
- You enjoy the exciting activities planned for you and many take full advantage of the many clubs after school.
- All the staff take very good care of you and keep you safe.
- The headteacher and other leaders know how to improve the school, but do not always give teachers enough help to enable them improve their teaching.

What we have asked the school to do now:

- Help to improve your writing by giving you more practice in all subjects.
- Make sure that teachers give work that gets the best out of boys and the most able pupils.
- Ensure that the school's leaders give teachers clear ideas about how to help you learn even faster.